

**Press Conference  
Richard Lepoutre  
April 15, 2013**

Good morning.

My name is Richard Lepoutre L E P O U T R E. I am the Committee Chair of Men Against Prostitution In America.

The Act Concerning Enhanced State Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking puts the State of Connecticut at the forefront in the fight against this human rights violation. Human Trafficking, Sex Trafficking, Modern Day Slavery. It has many names. It is surrounded by many myths and misconceptions.

But let me be clear, human trafficking is taking place right now throughout Connecticut. Most of its victims are not kidnapped or from some far off land. They are young women and men from Connecticut who are lured into a life of abuse, violence and rape – and it is all done for the profit and pleasure of the men who buy and sell these victims.

Last year the legislature voted unanimously to protect young people against this scourge by addressing Escort advertisements like those in the Hartford Advocate. It wasn't until after that law went into effect last October that the Advocate finally removed those ads forever.

Now, we are asking State Legislatures to recognize the realities of human trafficking in Connecticut and once again, be courageous in their decision to pass An Act Concerning Enhanced State Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking.

This legislation will strengthen the law against human traffickers by giving prosecutors more powerful tools to bring these criminals to justice. First, it redefines the very act of human trafficking making it far more difficult for pimps in this slip through the legal system.

The best example of this is the Paris brothers. One brother, Dennis, was convicted of federal human trafficking charges in 2007 for selling young women out motel rooms on the Silas Deane Highway by advertising them in the Hartford Advocate. He is serving 30 years in an Arizona Federal penitentiary.

His brother, Jaykuan, a more violent pimp than Dennis, sold young women out motel rooms on the Silas Deane Highway by advertising them on the internet.

Except Jaykuan had a partner: his wife Pearl, a Connecticut State Trooper. Jaykuan was only convicted by Connecticut for Promoting Prostitution and will probably serve about four years. Why the different outcomes? Connecticut's laws do not yet have the prosecutorial strength to withstand these crimes as we now understand them. That is why this legislation is necessary for Connecticut right now.

The law will also address the demand side of this crime by increasing the legal risk for the "Johns," the men who pay these pimps to have sex with the young women under their control. Men in Connecticut, men who think they are doing no harm when they purchase these victims for a few minutes of abuse, may be looking at real jail time for *their* crimes.

Along with giving these victims legal recourse to expunge their previous criminal records, which Marie (WILL SPEAK ABOUT) (SPOKE ABOUT), this legislation also establishes a real, *working* task force whose sole purpose is to make legislative recommendations and initiatives designed to reduce and prevent human trafficking.

I would urge you to keep a close eye on this important legislation, as well as the crime of human trafficking as it truly occurs in Connecticut. It is important that our lawmakers and the public get this right.

Thank you.